

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:DMCOCHRAN/MW

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 028979

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, BG, IN, EG

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR INDIA-BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN MEETING

REF: ISLAMABAD 1469; DACCA 658

1. IQBAL RIZA, MINISTER-COUNSELOR AT PAKISTAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON DELIVERED AIDE MEMOIRE TO DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER ON DECEMBER 12 WHICH SUPPORTS YOUR REPORT OF QUICKENING TEMPO IN MOVES RESOLVE INTERRELATED ISSUE (I) RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH BY PAKISTAN AND (II) RELEASE 195 PAKISTANI POWS WHO THREATENED WITH WAR CRIMES TRIALS.

2. AIDE MEMOIRE READS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: IN RESPONSE TO THE WIDESPREAD DESIRE IN THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF "BANGLADESH" IN THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT BEING HELD AT LAHORE FROM 22ND FEBRUARY, 1974, THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN HAS CONVEYED
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TO "BANGLADESH" ITS WILLINGNESS TO EXTEND RECOGNITION PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE AND BEFORE THE ACTUAL REPATRIATION OF THE 195 PRISONERS OF WAR NOT INCLUDED IN THE REPATRIA-

TION ARRANGEMENTS UNDER THE NEW DELHI AGREEMENT, PROVIDED THAT SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN GIVES A CREDIBLE AND CAST IRON COMMITMENT THAT NO TRIALS WILL BE HELD AND THAT THESE PRISONERS OF WAR WILL BE IMMEDIATELY REPATRIATED.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT PAKISTAN HAS THUS TAKEN A MAJOR STEP TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK HOLDING UP PROGRESS TOWARDS NORMAL RELATIONS ON THE SUB-CONTINENT AND THAT THE ONUS IS NOW ON BANGLADESH TO COOPERATE IN THIS DIRECTION. END QUOTE.

3. IN ENSUING CONVERSATION, RIZA NOTED THAT HE ASSUMED AMBASSADOR BYROADE INFORMED OF POSITION CONTAINED AIDE MEMOIRE; SOBER CONFIRMED THIS CORRECT. RIZA WENT ON SAY THAT PAKISTAN HAD BEEN UNDER MOUNTING PRESSURE FROM OTHER MUSLIM NATIONS RESOLVE RECOGNITION/RELEASE ISSUE SINCE PRESENCE OF BANGLADESH AT LAHORE MUSLIM SUMMIT SEEN AS DESIRABLE. ASKED OUTLOOK FOR RESOLUTION OF ISSUE, RIZA NOTED THAT PAKISTAN HAS TAKEN MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION AND THUS DECISION LIES WITH BANGLADESH. HE THEN ASKED HOW STRONG SENTIMENT FOR TRIAL OF 195 MIGHT BE IN BANGLADESH. SOBER STATED IT OUR IMPRESSION THAT TRIALS ARE MATTER OF DIMINISHING INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE, AND INCREASINGLY OVERSHADOWED BY OTHER PROBLEMS. HE ADDED THAT IMPORTANCE ASSIGNED TO TRIALS BY BDG WAS CLEARLY UNDERCORED WHEN IN DELHI AGREEMENT LAST AUGUST, BDG ACCEPTED TACIT PAKISTANI VETO ON TRANSFER OF 195 FROM INDIAN CONTROL TO THAT OF BENGALIS.

4. IN CLOSING, SOBER VOICED OUR STRONG HOPE THAT COUNTRIES OF REGION NOW ON VERGE RESOLVING RECOGNITION 195 ISSUE AND ALSO OPENING DOOR TO FURTHER STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA AS WELL AS PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH. KISSINGER

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